

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2538

Introduced by Assembly Member Ruskin

February 22, 2008

An act to add Division 27.5 (commencing with Section 44575) to the Health and Safety Code, relating to greenhouse gas emissions.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2538, as introduced, Ruskin. Greenhouse gas emissions: consumer product labeling.

The California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 designates the State Air Resources Board as the state agency charged with monitoring and regulating sources of emissions of greenhouse gases that cause global warming in order to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

This bill would enact the Carbon Labeling Act of 2008. The act would require the state board to develop and implement a program for the voluntary assessment, verification, and standardized labeling of the carbon footprint, as defined, of consumer products sold in this state.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. Division 27.5 (commencing with Section 44575)
- 2 is added to the Health and Safety Code, to read:

1 DIVISION 27.5. THE CARBON LABELING ACT OF 2008

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3 CHAPTER 1. TITLE4
5 44575. This division shall be known, and may be cited, as the
6 Carbon Labeling Act of 2008.7
8 CHAPTER 2. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS9
10 44576. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:
11 (a) Global warming poses a serious threat to the economic
12 well-being, public health, natural resources, and the environment
13 of California.14 (b) The California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006
15 (Division 25.5 (commencing with Section 38500)) provides a
16 regulatory framework to establish and enforce greenhouse gas
17 emission reductions.18 (c) Voluntary consumer choice can play a significant role in
19 helping California meet its greenhouse gas emission reduction
20 targets, but only if consumers have usable and reliable information
21 about the carbon emissions resulting from their product choices.22 (d) It has been estimated that household consumption of
23 consumer goods in the United States accounts for emissions of
24 more than 15 metric tons of greenhouse gas equivalents, or about
25 one-third of total household emissions, per year.26 (e) The development of a voluntary carbon labeling program
27 for consumer products can harness the power of the marketplace
28 to create incentives for manufacturers to innovate and compete to
29 reduce the carbon footprint of their products.30
31 CHAPTER 3. DEFINITIONS32
33 44578. As used in this division:34 (a) "Carbon footprint" means the estimated total amount of
35 greenhouse gas emissions that occur as a result of the manufacture,
36 distribution, and sale of a product as measured in carbon dioxide
37 equivalent, as defined in subdivision (c) of Section 38505.38 (b) "Program" means the carbon labeling program developed
39 and implemented pursuant to Chapter 4 (commencing with Section
40 44580).

1 (c) “State board” means the State Air Resources Board.

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3 CHAPTER 4. CARBON LABELING PROGRAM
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5 44580. (a) The state board shall develop and implement a
6 program for the voluntary assessment, verification, and labeling
7 of the carbon footprint of consumer products sold in this state.

8 (b) The program shall do all of the following:

9 (1) Establish a methodology for determining and communicating
10 the carbon footprint of a consumer product. If feasible, the state
11 board shall establish standards and methodologies for determining
12 and communicating to consumers on a product label whether a
13 product has a lower carbon footprint than the average comparable
14 product available in the state.

15 (2) Develop a standardized, easily understandable, label that
16 communicates to consumers relevant information about the carbon
17 footprint of a consumer product.

18 (3) Allow a consumer product manufacturer, on a voluntary
19 basis, to determine the carbon footprint of the product by applying
20 the criteria and standards developed by the state board, and to
21 include that information on the product, product packaging, and
22 product advertising, consistent with the labeling standards
23 developed by the board.

24 (c) The state board shall consult with representatives of
25 consumer product manufacturers, consumer groups, and
26 environmental groups, and conduct public hearings and workshops
27 as required to comply with this section.

28 (d) The state board may contract with appropriate experts to
29 develop a proposed carbon footprint methodology and carbon
30 labeling standard.

31 (e) Consumer product manufacturers that label their products
32 in accordance with this chapter shall be responsible for all costs
33 related to the review and validation of carbon label information
34 required by the state board.